

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A piezoelectric ceramic composition characterized by containing:

metallic element K;

metallic element Na;

metallic element Nb;

M1, which represents a divalent metallic element, or a metallic element combination formally equivalent to a divalent metallic element;

M2, which represents a tetravalent metallic element, or a metallic element combination formally equivalent to a tetravalent metallic element;

M3, which represents a metallic element of a sintering aid component and which is at least one of Fe, Co, Ni, Mg, Zn, and Cu; and

non-metallic element O, wherein, when K, Na, Nb, M1, and M2 constitute the formula $[(1/2)aK_2O - (1/2)bNa_2O - cM1O - (1/2)dNb_2O_5 - eM2O_2]$, a, b, c, d, and e in the formula satisfy the following relations:

$$0 < a < 0.50, 2 \leq a < 0.5,$$

$$0 < b \leq 0.25,$$

$$0 < c < 0.11,$$

$$0.4 < d < 0.56,$$

$$0 < e < 0.12,$$

$$0.4 < a + b + c \leq 0.5, \text{ and}$$

$a + b + c + d + e = 1$; and when the total amount of K, Na, Nb, Ml, and M2 as reduced to corresponding oxides is 100 parts by mass, the amount of M3 as reduced to M3 oxide is 5 parts by mass or less.

2. (Original) A piezoelectric ceramic composition as described in claim 1, wherein, when the total amount of K, Na, Nb, Ml, and M2 as reduced to corresponding oxides is 100 parts by mass, the amount of M3 as reduced to M3 oxide is 0.1 parts by mass or less.

3. (Previously Presented) A piezoelectric ceramic composition as described in claim 1, wherein M1 is at least one of Ca, Sr, Ba, $(\text{Bi}_{0.5}\text{Na}_{0.5})$, and $(\text{Bi}_{0.5}\text{K}_{0.5})$

4. (Previously Presented) A piezoelectric ceramic composition as described in claim 1, wherein M2 is at least one of Ti, Zr, and Sn.

5. (Cancelled).

6. (Previously Presented) A piezoelectric ceramic composition as described in claim 1, wherein M3 is a combination of Cu and at least one of Fe, Co, Ni Mg, and Zn.

7. (Previously Presented) A piezoelectric ceramic composition as described in claim 1, wherein a, b, and d in the formula satisfy the following relation: $(a + b)/d \leq 1.00$.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No.: 10/558,383 (Q90710)

8. (Previously Presented) A piezoelectric ceramic composition as described in claim 1, wherein a, b, and c in the formula satisfy the following relation: $0 < c/(a + b + c) \leq 0.20$.

9. (Previously Presented) A piezoelectric ceramic composition as described in claim 1, which contains, in addition to K, Na, Nb, M1, M2, and M3, metallic element Li, wherein at least one of K and Na in the formula is partially substituted by Li.

10. (Previously Presented) A piezoelectric ceramic composition as described in claim 1, which contains, in addition to K, Na, Nb, M1, M2, and M3, metallic element Ta, wherein Nb in the formula is partially substituted by Ta.

11. (Previously Presented) A piezoelectric ceramic composition as described in claim 1, which contains, in addition to K, Na, Nb, M1, M2, and M3, metallic element Sb, wherein Nb in the formula is partially substituted by Sb.

12. (Previously Presented) A piezoelectric ceramic composition as described in claim 1, which has a perovskite crystal structure.

13. (Currently Amended) A piezoelectric ceramic composition as described in claim 12, wherein the perovskite crystals belong to an orthorhombic system.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No.: 10/558,383 (Q90710)

14. (Previously Presented) A piezoelectric element characterized by comprising a piezoelectric member formed of a piezoelectric ceramic composition as recited in claim 1; and at least a pair of electrodes which are in contact with the piezoelectric member.